

a relatively small area. In Sussex I have encountered it only once, on 15.vi.1974. That was on Lewes Levels, where I took a specimen by general sweeping – curiously enough just a year before Mr Jones obtained one in the same area – but was unaware that it was the first to have been found in East Sussex.— A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

***Oncomera femorata* (Fabr.) (Col.: Oedemeridae); a recent find in the London area**

Colin Plant's note (*Ent. Rec.* **113**: 230) on this interesting species reminds me that my friend Keith Lewis obtained one from oak *Quercus* sp., in Chalk Wood, near Bexley, north-west Kent a few years ago. My impression is that the beetle is probably almost general over, much of England, but being of rather obscure habits is probably often passed over despite its considerable size. It is indeed remarkable that the early stages and their habitat remain unknown. My sole find of this species was a male beaten out of ivy *Hedera helix* on a tree at Fairlight Glen, East Sussex, on 27 September 1949.— A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

Early mating in the Seven-spot Ladybird *Coccinella septempunctata* (L.) (Col.: Coccinellidae)

On 13 February 2000, at Trumpington, Cambridgeshire (vice-county 29), a pair of Seven-spot Ladybirds *Coccinella septempunctata* was engaged in mating activity on low vegetation at around 10.30 hours. The locality was a thin strip of south-facing grass verge along a fairly quiet road, bordered on the north side by hedgerow and woodland: a classic "sun trap". The morning was sunny, still and moderately warm, as was much of the winter and early spring of 1999-2000. On this occasion only four other individuals of this species were seen at this locality, but numbers visible there grew to 40 on 26 February (when no mating was observed) and more than 250 on 12 March (three mating pairs). The large number of Seven-spot Ladybirds in and around Cambridge during the second week of March 2000 suggests that the main emergence from over-wintering sites in that year occurred then. Majerus' standard work (1994. *Ladybirds*. HarperCollins), surveying the years 1985-1989, gives (p. 63) the earliest date for such pairing as 17 March (in 1989) and the mean for the four-year period 1985-1988 as 21 April, with emergence taking place in the second week of March in 1989, a month in advance of the more usual date. In a paper evidently written later (1992. *Ent. Rec.* **104**: 135-142 and 173-183) the same author reports mating as early as 25 February in 1990.

The behaviour of other species of ladybirds during the late winter and early spring period of 2000 also seems to have been seasonally advanced, but I did not note any further exceptional events. Many pairs of the Pine Ladybird *Exochomus quadripustulatus* (L.) were mating in the Trumpington area on 12 March, the date